



Art Environment Sustainability 2020-2021

Elsewhere Studios, Paonia, CO
Texas Tech University
Western Colorado University

Carol Flueckiger, MFA
Associate Professor Art
Texas Tech University



Summer 2021 marks the third annual Art, Environment, Sustainability Residency. Born out of the Inspired: Art @ Work program hosted by Elsewhere in 2018, this residency hosts students from Texas Tech University and Western Colorado University during the month of June at Elsewhere Studios in Paonia, CO. Each student works on their own independent research project and shares their project thesis, resources and methodologies with each other. The idea is that the conversations may influence each student's work. This immersive interdisciplinary experience responds to Atmospheric Scientist & Climate Communicator Katharine Hayhoe's proposal that "The most important thing you can do to fight climate change: talk about it." We think art can be a great catalyst for the discussion. This booklet records notes about the research, discussions and workshops that took place. Due to COVID, we are including 2020 in this record.

Carol Flueckiger, MFA
Associate Professor Art, Texas Tech University

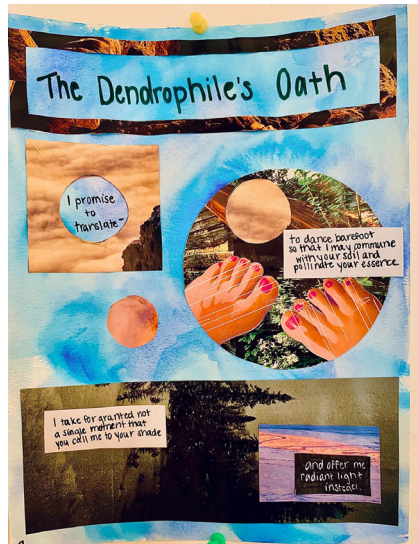


Jeanea Blair, 2021

Western Colorado University, Environment & Sustainability

Her master's project will include building an outdoor community space on WCU's campus. Here, students and local residents can gather to discuss the intersections between spirituality, art, and ecology. Community members will meet here not only for discussion, but for hands-on activities. These events are meant to foster community resilience in a time of unpredictable climate disasters. The project site will also feature commissioned pieces from local artists who use material and structure to convey an ecological message. Come check it out in May 2022!

My work, both personal and professional, is centered on the connection between humans and nature, and whether this distinction between the two is at all true or even useful. Sitting under the rare and beautiful American Elm in Elsewhere's backyard, I asked myself: take the nature out of humans and what remains? An aluminum corpse without a single dream, I suppose. We are born of the mud in a biblical and literal sense, and born of the stars the same. What of us isn't nature? Certainly not the minerals in our blood or the instincts to eat and love. It's the aluminum in our pockets, the plastics in our guts. Take the nature out of humans and all that remains is a landfill. From the trees we take wisdom and from the desert sands rage; from the fruits nutrition and from water life itself. Without the guidance of our predecessors we are students without a teacher, a voyage without a lighthouse. If this is obvious, ask the next big question: what instead remains of nature without humans? These questions keep me in the pursuit of poetry, creation, and love.



Sara Drescher, 2021

Texas Tech University, Art
ART 5304, Grad Studio 2D, Independent Study

Award winning artist, Sara Drescher has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of North Texas School of Art and is currently a candidate for her Master of Fine Arts at Texas Tech University School of Art. She has been working as a full-time, professional artist since 2001 and has exhibited her work in the United States from coast to coast. Sara's current research involves questioning how we apply value systems in this current economy to the environment and to women.

My current work focuses on both landscape and gender equality under the umbrella of sustainability. I paint watercolor still lifes of reimagined and empowered casserole dishes to dialogue about gender issues that still plague women, from traditional domestic roles to physical safety. While at the residency, I had a goal to connect the two veins of sustainability in my work. While visiting with my cohort, Jeanea Blair, Project Drawdown was mentioned and I found research that focused on the impact of gender inequality and the environment. Much of the impact has to do with women as primary agricultural workers around the world. Providing food connects to my casserole dishes in a visual way and the plight of women is seen on the messages I develop on my paintings of the crockery. Another connection I was able to make between the landscape and women involved Basia Irland's project, Ice Receding/Books Reseeding, which creates "ice books" containing local/native seeds to float in bodies of water. By creating an "Ice Book" shaped by a casserole dish, I manifested a sculptural and performative piece that connected my work to Irland's international project. My "Reseeding Casseroles" offer nourishment and growth to the environment rather than consumption.





Jenna Kelmser, 2020

Western Colorado University, Environment & Sustainability

(2020 COVID) While at Humboldt State University, she received a BS in Environmental Science: Energy and Climate and Minor in Geography. She has always felt that science and art are much to separate in the academic world and hoped to find more of those connections. She had always utilized the art of ceramics to ground herself during her studies and hopes to now find a way to share that with others. While at Elsewhere Studios, her main focus was around the word “grounding”, researching affordable housing alternatives for the Gunnison Community and making “Plates for the People”!

While at Elsewhere Studios I was able to connect quite a few of my passions. Giving me space to hone in on my master’s project, while finding other ways to express the passions that the project couldn’t reflect with the opportunity to ponder freely. I realized that all of my passions circled around the idea of grounding, grounding oneself and the people around me. The opportunity to get back into a lost art of mine, ceramics, created a space to forage shapes that can bring us all together out of the ground beneath us. My favorite technique in ceramics, sgraffito (scratching through a surface to reveal a lower layer of a contrasting color), was the medium. Neato Sgraffito: A Stuff of the Ground Show, showcased my Plates for the People and emphasized how important it is to think about where your food comes from, as well as the plates you eat off of everyday. This medium focuses on negative spaces, something that in my opinion gives space for negative energy as well as a space to dump ideas and focus and ground yourself. Because of their direct connection to local economies, the ceramic pieces also bring up ideas of my master’s research. This research shows the importance and cost effectiveness of locally sourced natural built houses for low income people. Helping create safe and healthy, inspirational environments for these people to live in and be grounded.



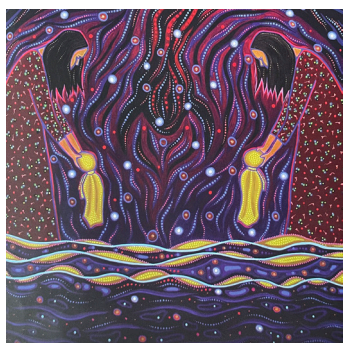


Workshops



Solar Powered Painting

Carol Flueckiger, Professor of Art, Texas Tech University, worked with students to upcycle thrift store shirts by coating them with cyanotype and printing them with cuttings from the garden. Participants think about the sun as a paintbrush, thrift shirts as canvas, nature as design, and the body as gallery. Renewable energy resources and recycling add to the conversation.



What Kind of Ancestor *Do You Want to Be?*

EDITED BY JOHN HAUSDOERFFER, BROOKE PARRY HECHT,
MELISSA K. NELSON, AND KATHERINE KASSOUF CUMMINGS

What Kind of Ancestor Do You Want to Be?

Dr. John Hausdoerffer, Dean Environment, Sustainability, Western Colorado University, offered readings and discussion from his current book about past and future generations. Participants are asked to think their daily life in context to their future ancestral selves. What underlines their approach to each day that may impact the world's future generations and environments?



Ice Books

Students accepted an invitation from international artist Basia Irland to make ice books that were launched into the North Fork of the Gunnison River. Ice Receding / Books Reseeding is an international series that emphasizes the necessity of communal effort, scientific knowledge, and poetic artistic intervention to deal with the complex issues of climate disruption and watershed restoration through the release of seed-laden ephemeral ice sculptures into rivers, creeks, and streams. These impermanent sculptural tomes are vehicles for change.



Elsewhere Studios is an artist residency program in Paonia CO, hosting artists from around the world to have time and space to focus on their work in a unique and supportive environment. Elsewhere is a choose-your-own-adventure style residency, providing residents with the opportunity to connect with the community ... or just time to focus on work. Time spans are individually based- 1 to 6 months, accommodating 4 to 6 artists at a time. Since its inception in 2011, the Elsewhere Studios Residency Program has hosted over 189 artists from 28 states and 14 countries (Argentina, Iran, Columbia, Mexico, Canada, England, Japan, Switzerland, Bangladesh, India, Ireland, Netherlands, and Finland). The program is open to visual artists, writers, composers, and performing artists at any stage or their career as well as scientists, activists, teachers, students, or any kind of creative thinker interested in exploring and expanding their work. Artists are supported in the creation of new work and new ideas through dedicated time, a space conducive to focused work, and an environment that is both stimulating and nurturing. The artists are selected through a competitive application process. The residency program includes housing, studio space, and utilities. The staff is dedicated to making this a positive experience and to finding resources and networking with the local community and resources as needed. The multidisciplinary resident artists interact, share, and often collaborate with each other.